



Congressman Taylor meets with General F.P. Bodenheimer to discuss the use of a building in Franklin for the CBOC.

Community Based Outpatient Clinic Announced for Franklin

While surrounded by public officials, community leaders and veterans from across WNC, Congressman Taylor announced on June 23, 2006 at the American Legion Post 108 in Franklin that a new Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) has been approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide needed care to veterans west of Asheville. The new CBOC – which will be opened in the Town of Franklin – is part of his comprehensive plan to modernize health care facilities in Western North Carolina.

About 80% of the health care provided by the VA is in the form of outpatient care. This new CBOC will serve as an extension of the existing VA Medical Center in Asheville that already provides highly specialized care to WNC veterans. Specifically, the new CBOC in Franklin will provide both primary care and mental health services to an estimated 3,200 veterans each year.

The new CBOC in Franklin will allow veterans to receive medical care much closer to where they live without having to make the long trip to Asheville every time they need to see a doctor, and the result will be broader access to health care for our veterans.

Congressman Taylor has secured more than \$75 million for the Asheville VA Medical Center through a sixteen-point plan, including the construction of a new 120-bed Nursing Home Care Unit, as well as the establishment of inpatient hospice, an adult day health care program and a day treatment center. The addition of the new CBOC in Franklin, combined with the improvements made at the Asheville VA Medical Center, will continue to enhance and modernize the health care provided to our veterans.



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

PUBLIC DOCUMENT
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

This mailing was prepared,
published and mailed at
taxpayer expense.

Charles H. Taylor
M.C.

PRSRT STD



CHARLES TAYLOR
ELEVENTH DISTRICT
U.S. CONGRESS
OF NORTH CAROLINA

Washington, DC
202-225-6401

Spindale
828-286-8750

Asheville
828-251-1988

Hendersonville
828-697-8539

Murphy
828-837-3249

Sylva
828-586-6100

Waynesville
828-456-7559

Franklin
828-349-9856

CHARLESTAYLOR.HOUSE.GOV



CONGRESSMAN
CHARLES TAYLOR

VETERANS UPDATE

REPRESENTING WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA'S 11TH DISTRICT



A SALUTE TO OUR VETERANS

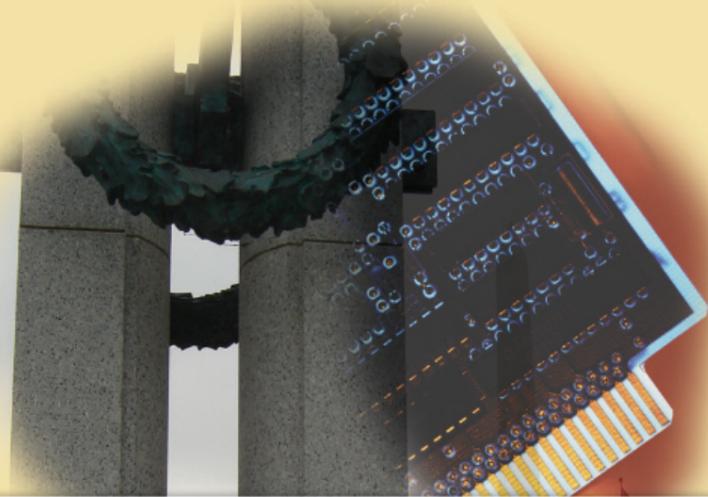
I commend all of the brave individuals who have served our great country with the highest level of courage and honor. Because our veterans have been fundamental in preserving the independence of our country, it is the duty of Congress to properly thank them for their service by providing them with the necessary resources to protect their rights.

This year alone, my colleagues in the House of Representatives and I have accomplished a number of things that are of critical importance to WNC veterans. As you will read in this newsletter, veterans' benefits are now funded at record levels; TRICARE fees for our veterans will **NOT** be increased; and we are working in Congress to ensure that the identities of 26.5 million veterans will not be compromised again.

Lastly, as a veteran, you will be pleased to know that I recently announced that the Department of Veterans Affairs has approved a new Community Based Outpatient Clinic to be opened in Franklin to provide the needed health care services to veterans living west of Asheville. I highly encourage you to read further in this newsletter to learn more about this important development for WNC veterans.

Please know that as your Representative, I will continue to work on the issues vital to veterans so that their efforts will never be forgotten. Additionally, if I can be of any assistance to you with inquiries to the Department of Veterans Affairs, please visit the Constituent Services section of my website at <http://charlestaylor.house.gov> or contact one of my local offices.

Charles



Protecting Veterans' Identities

Like many veterans around WNC and the nation, Congressman Taylor was outraged by reports that an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs compromised the security of the identities of 26.5 million veterans. At no time should this sensitive and confidential information have been removed from its secure location.

Even though the stolen laptop was recovered on June 29, 2006, the veterans of WNC should closely monitor their credit reports and monthly bills for any suspicious activity. If you detect suspicious or unusual activity in your personal financial statement, please first follow these recommendations of the Federal Trade Commission:

STEP 1

Contact the fraud department of *one* of the three major credit bureaus:

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; www.equifax.com;

Experian: 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742); www.experian.com;

TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289; www.transunion.com.

STEP 2

Close any accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently

STEP 3

File a police report with your local police or the police in the community where the identity theft took place.

STEP 4

File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission by using the FTC's Identity Theft Hotline by telephone: 1-877-438-4338, or go online to www.consumer.gov/idtheft

Additionally, the VA recently announced that it will provide one year of free credit monitoring to people whose sensitive personal information may have been stolen. The VA continues to operate a call center that people can contact to get information about this incident and learn more about consumer-identity protections. That toll free number is 1-800-FED-INFO (1-800-333-4636). The call center is operating from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm (EDT), Monday-Saturday as long as it is needed.



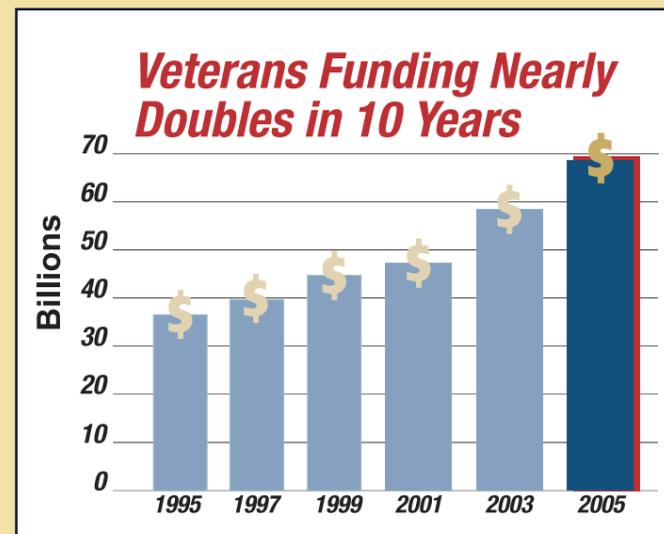
Strengthening Veterans' Benefits

In May, Congressman Taylor helped pass H.R. 5385, *the Fiscal Year 2007 Military Quality of Life Appropriations* bill. This bill contains some of the highest veterans funding levels in history, and for the first time, the Veterans Service Organization's Independent Budget was used as the base-line for funding. Among its provisions:

- Veterans' medical care is funded at its highest level ever with a \$2.6 billion increase over the FY06 level at \$25 billion
- Mandatory veterans' benefits are increased by \$4.2 billion over FY06
- Veterans' mental health services funding is \$2.8 billion for FY07
- \$21 billion is provided for the Defense Health Program, an increase of \$1 billion over the enacted level of FY06

Congressman Taylor recently helped pass the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2006, which passed the House by a vote of 408-0 on June 27, 2006. This legislation provides a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to disability compensation rates for veterans with service-connected disabilities, equal to the adjustment provided under Social Security.

Congressman Taylor is also a cosponsor of the *Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act*. This bill would repeal the offset from surviving spouse annuities under the military Survivor Benefit Plan for amounts paid as dependency and indemnity compensation.



TRICARE Benefits for Military Retirees

WNC veterans deserve access to high quality and affordable health care. Through the improvements to the VA Medical Center in Asheville – because of the sixteen point plan – and the opening of the new CBOC in Franklin, our veterans are able to receive that care.

Additionally, TRICARE has continually improved in recent years while keeping fees within reason for our veterans. However, within the Fiscal Year 2007 Department of Defense Budget Request, the Department included a \$735 million “cost savings” through an increase in TRICARE fees for military retirees under the age of 65. It maintained that the savings would result from not only increased revenues, but also behavior modifications that would result from the changes.

On May 11, 2006, Congressman Taylor supported the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007*, and it passed the House by a vote of 396-31. This legislation **prohibits the Department's ability to increase TRICARE Prime, Standard and TRICARE Reserve Select cost shares until at least December 31, 2007.** The *Fiscal Year 2007 Military Quality of Life Appropriations* bill also did **NOT** include any additional TRICARE fees for veterans and it passed the House with Congressman Taylor's support by a vote of 395-0 on May 19, 2006.

While the Administration's proposal was meant to be a cost-saving measure, it is the wrong way to go about it – it sends a message to those who have bravely served our nation through their military service that we are going back on a promise made to them.